



*Embassy of the United States of America
for Mauritius and Seychelles*

PRESS RELEASE

**The United States and Seychelles Sign Bilateral Agreement on Countering Illicit
Transnational Maritime Activity Operations**

July 27, 2021: The United States and Seychellois Governments officially signed a Bilateral Agreement on Countering Illicit Transnational Maritime Activity Operations during a ceremony on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at the Independence House Annex in Seychelles. The Agreement was signed by U.S. Embassy Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Thom Kohl, and Seychelles' Minister for Internal Affairs Errol Fonseka.

This is the first bilateral maritime Agreement between the United States and an East African country. Maritime governance which includes the protection of fisheries, preservation of ecosystems, and prevention of crime at sea is a shared responsibility. Through this Agreement the United States and Seychelles strengthen the global network of like-minded partners countering these challenges to maritime security.

The bilateral agreement will enable the United States and Seychelles to strengthen their shared maritime governance by better detecting, deterring, and suppressing illicit transnational maritime activities. This Agreement also represents a significant milestone in the United States-Seychelles bilateral relationship. U.S. Naval Forces Africa and the U.S. Coast Guard have developed a close partnership with the Seychelles People's Defense Forces, and this bilateral agreement re-affirms the commitment by both governments to further strengthen cooperative law enforcement activities.

"We have always recognized Seychelles as one of the most active and willing maritime security partners in this region. But we know, too, that neither the United States nor Seychelles can assure regional peace alone. We acknowledge that only together can the threats of our time be defeated," U.S. Embassy Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Mr. Thomas Kohl said.

Seychelles' Minister for Internal Affairs, Errol Fonseka said, "There is an urgent need for the international community to come together to prevent and combat transnational organized crime. The agreement that we have just signed, aims to strengthen the cooperative law enforcement activities between both our nations for the purpose of detecting, identifying, combating, preventing, and interdicting illicit transnational maritime activities. It is fully in line with our mutual desire and values to promote unity and solidarity between Seychelles and the United States of America and to coordinate and intensify our cooperation and efforts to achieve a safer maritime zone."

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